



## EUROPEAN NEWS

## Spain makes official protest about RN ships

BY TOM BURNS IN MADRID

THE ARRIVAL in Gibraltar today of HMS Invincible and a dozen other Royal Navy ships has prompted the strongest protest in years over the British presence on the Rock.

An official protest made to Sir Richard Parsons, the British ambassador, said the Spanish Government was "profoundly preoccupied and concerned" about the arrival of the Royal Navy. It was prepared to take "the necessary diplomatic and political measures" to protect national rights and territorial waters.

It warned that the British action had succeeded in placing the issue "in a dimension not wished by the Spanish Government and . . . for which (Britain) was solely res-

ponsible."

The British ships are on their way home from the "Springrain" exercises in the Eastern Atlantic. While the embassy blandly claimed the flotilla's presence was mere "routine," and that there had been no protests when even more vessels had docked in Gibraltar on similar occasions in the past, a Spanish ministerial spokesman replied: "We've been hearing the argument about routine for years."

The Madrid newspaper *Diario 16* yesterday headlined "The British fleet of the Malvinas practises the defence of Gibraltar." HMS Invincible's role in the recapture of the Falkland

Islands was graphically expressed.

Surprised by the furor, some diplomats in Madrid yesterday argued that the protest was largely for home consumption. Spain has started campaigning for strongly politicised municipal elections on May 8 and the Socialist Government has ensured adroitly that none will accuse it of failure to safeguard Spanish interests.

A second factor was said to be the Government's need to be seen to sabre-rattle just as the last act is played out in the February 1981 attempted coup trial. A highly technical appeal court hearing ended on Monday with the Government demanding higher sentences for the convicted military plotters. The

Supreme Court's decision is due next week.

This does not detract, however, from the evident seriousness with which the Government approaches the Gibraltar issue. In the opinion of some political observers, Sr Felipe Gonzalez's Government is one of "young nationalists" who, while keeping the door open to negotiations will pursue Spain's perennial claim to the Rock with far greater emphasis than previous administrations.

Having moved swiftly to open the border partially when it took office in December, the Spanish Government insists that it is now Britain's turn to make a gesture and, specifically, to show flexibility on the

acceptance of sovereignty as a negotiating issue.

The arrival of HMS Invincible, with its Falklands dimension, was said by Spanish diplomats to indicate "a breakdown of trust."

They stressed that the "diplomatic and political measures" envisaged by the protest note did not include a return to a total blockade because it was a policy decision "not to penalise the local population of the Gibraltar area." But, at the very least, while the Royal Navy remains in the area in force, an emotional anti-British campaign can be expected in Spain with full government sponsorship.

## Building industry deaths fall

By Anthony McDermott in Geneva

ACCIDENTAL DEATH in the construction industry has fallen steadily over the past decade, according to a report by the International Labour Office. The prospects for further improvements, however, are not so good.

Construction, with four times more fatal accidents than industry as a whole, is the second most dangerous industry after coal-mining, says the report.

The trend towards fewer casualties is more pronounced in such developed countries as Japan, the Netherlands, Britain and the U.S. than in the developing world. Between 1971 and 1980 there were 8.5 deaths per million working hours in developed nations, compared with 9.26 in the industrialised world, mainly because of primitive and non-industrial building methods.

But, as the ILO report observes: "The hazards of having no housing at all . . . appear greater than the hazards of construction."

It calls for tighter contract, safety and building standards, and the development, in less industrialised countries, of ways to step up construction management training.

Until these are entered, the ILO concludes, there are no real grounds for optimism.

## Hazel Duffy and Brendan Keenan interview Alan Dukes, Ireland's new Finance Minister



Alan Dukes: "People still talk to me"

## 'We cannot keep on borrowing to keep on spending'

ALAN DUKES, the Irish Finance Minister, is at 37 the second-youngest Minister in Ireland's coalition Government. His job, in a country with severe economic problems, is not likely to make him one of the more popular politicians, after a first budget which made people aware of just how harsh the future would be.

The budget measures will add up to 4 per cent to the cost of living this year, bringing Irish inflation close to 12 per cent. Direct taxes were increased and real living standards could fall by 10 per cent this year for many wage and salary earners. Irish prices for petrol, drink and consumer goods are among the highest in Europe and a middle manager can expect to pay 40 per cent tax on his salary.

Mr Dukes remains reasonably light-hearted, however. "People still talk to me," he says. "In fact, a number of people said the budget was not as tough as they expected."

The Finance Minister is very approachable and communicative—characteristics which may be tempered when he has had more experience in government. His only previous Cabinet post was as Minister for Agriculture during the short-lived first FitzGerald Government—his post he was given just a month after being elected to the Dail (parliament) for the first time.

His earlier experience, however, puts him firmly in the mould of the new Irish (and European) politician: personal adviser to Mr Richard Burke, European Commissioner, between 1977 and 1980; director of the Irish Farmers' Association in Brussels between 1973 and 1976, having previously been chief economist to the association.

He describes himself as a "social democrat, with a touch of 19th century liberalism, which was more democratic than people give it credit for." He studied economics at University College, Dublin, under Mr FitzGerald. He does not want to be tagged by any school of economic philosophy, however. "I am very suspicious of all schools of economics and I have never been a great believer in propaganda—including my own," he says.

Mr Dukes has firm enough ideas, however, about the direction in which the Irish economy must be steered. "We have recognised the fact that we cannot keep on borrowing to keep on spending, because this puts a large burden on taxpayers in following years," he said.

His budget strategy was aimed specifically at cutting the deficit on the current account of the balance of payments and reducing foreign borrowing. The deficit is expected to fall by almost half, to £550m (£502m), about 5 per cent of Gross National Product, while net foreign borrowing will drop by a quarter to £280m.

Critics of the Dukes budget say it does nothing about one of the root causes of the economic problems—excessive public spending. Even after the budget, Government spending as a percentage of national income will remain virtually unchanged at over 60 per cent.

Mr Dukes does not believe in an all-out attack on public spending. To the industrialists who have called for cuts in current spending, as well as those already made in the capital programme, he replies: "They are taking too simplistic a view."

The growth in Ireland's population and the need for a health service to which Ireland has fallen a late victim, mean that "substantial resources will have to be devoted to unemployment pay and the provision of employment opportunities. We shall have to give greater priority to these areas than others."

Mr Dukes' social democratic leanings show a tinge of fashionable conservative thinking, however, in his views that social benefits should be more discriminatory. "I get the same family allowances for two children," he says, "as somebody who has virtually no taxable income, and we have a broadly-based health service. We have to look at the equity of these services."

The future for everybody in Ireland, at least in the short term, is tough, he says. "For the next couple of years, real incomes and living standards will fall. We will have to plan to control the economy so that it bears some relation to what we want as a community and so that we can gain some constructive benefit in terms of the structure of social security and the tax system."

Mr Dukes described his budget as "a holding operation which will prevent the collapse of public finances." The severity of the measures has to be weighed against the prospect that, without such a budget, "the Government would have been unable to pay its employees by the autumn."

Mr Dukes clearly enjoys the task of trying to set the troubled Irish economy to rights.

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## Pressure builds up for European ban on lead in petrol

BY JOHN GRIFFITHS

THE West German car industry is stepping up pressure for legislation requiring lead-free petrol to be used in Europe.

The campaign is being led by BMW, West Germany's third largest car-maker, which first called publicly for the introduction of lead-free fuel at last month's motor show in Geneva.

Talks are to take place with West German government ministers on the subject this month. At the same time meetings with oil industry representatives are to investigate

what changes might be made to petrol to keep octane ratings up and avoid loss of performance—possibly by adding methanol.

The debate is intensifying outside West Germany: within the European Commission and the Committee of Common Market Constructors (CCMC), representing all Europe's main motor manufacturers. A CCMC technical committee is to investigate the issue in detail shortly.

It is deeply controversial, with the benefits of removing

lead as a poisonous pollutant being weighed against the substantial costs and technical difficulties facing the European industry in adapting to lead-free fuel.

Currently, both Switzerland and Sweden are firmly backing the lead-free approach. The stiffest opposition is coming from the Italian, French and British industries.

According to Dr Karlheinz Radermacher, head of research and development at BMW, both his own company and Daimler-

Benz now accept that there would be no option but to introduce U.S.-style exhaust catalytic converters if lead-free petrol is enforced.

Alternative approaches have been tried, "but they have increased fuel consumption by 35-40 per cent," BMW has also tested catalytic converters which are claimed to allow lead to be used but prevent its emission in the exhaust. However, "they have never gone more than 10,000 kms before cracking up."

The emphasis which BMW in particular is placing on the subject indicates that the company is undergoing a sea change in terms of how it plans to apply its technology. In the past, it has placed much emphasis on sportiness and performance. "But the company will not necessarily stay successful by repeating the same old formula," according to Dr Horst Avenarius, director of information.

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## OVERSEAS NEWS

## Gulf slick swelling at rate of 4,000 b/d

By Mary Frings in Bahrain and Kathy Evans in Kuwait

THE OIL slick now threatening Gulf shores is thought to be growing at a rate of 4,000 barrels a day, approximately twice the rate officially admitted, an oil industry expert said yesterday. He called the estimate conservative.

Some 225,000 barrels of oil are now reckoned to have poured into the shallow, semi-enclosed waters of the Gulf, which is already ecologically at risk from dense tanker traffic and increasing industrial effluent.

In Kuwait, eight Gulf ministers and environmental experts are due to try again today to secure agreement between Iran and Iraq so that a clean-up might begin.

Prospects are grim, however, because of the renewed hostilities between the two countries. Last week the conference of the Regional Organisation for the Protection of the Marine Environment (Ropme) also failed to agree on any immediate steps.

Precise estimates of the size of the slick remain difficult to calculate. One part of it, 20 miles wide but broken up into patches with tarry globules several feet in diameter, was reported yesterday 12 miles to the east of Saudi Arabia's offshore Marjan oilfield.

## Zimbabwean dissidents ambush train

By Our Harare Correspondent

INSURGENTS attacked a train on the main line from neighbouring Botswana to Zimbabwe at the weekend, killing the driver.

A Zimbabwe Government spokesman said yesterday that the train, which was heading for Bulawayo, was ambushed about a mile inside Zimbabwean territory. Damage to the locomotive was minimal but the driver was killed and another railwayman wounded.

It is the first time that the dissidents operating against the government in the western province of Matabeleland have attacked a train. Some observers see this as politically significant in that the Botswana railway is used not only for Zimbabwean import-export traffic with South Africa, which is the country's main trading partner, but also for traffic to and from Zambia and Zaire.

During the independence war the railway line from Zambia to the South African ports was attacked relatively infrequently, apparently because the Zaire guerrillas operating in the area were based in Zambia. But there is speculation that since the dissidents have no ties with Zambia, they might now attack the railway that is so important to Zambia.

## USSR-Japan talks highlight recent cooling of relations

BY CHARLES SMITH, FAR EAST EDITOR, IN TOKYO

THE RECENT deterioration in relations between Japan and the Soviet Union was highlighted yesterday when officials from the foreign ministries of the two countries held a six-hour review of political and military development in Asia.

During the talks Japan protested strongly at Soviet attempts to play up reports of reviving Japanese militarism in South-East Asia.

The Japanese side also reiterated calls for the withdrawal from eastern Siberia of Soviet SS-20 missiles and emphasised that Japan could not feel secure while the missiles remained in position.

In reply to Japan's protests Mr Mikhail Kapitsa, the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, said that Soviet statements about the political situation in Japan had been based on the objective situation.

The SS-20 missiles in Siberia, Mr Kapitsa explained, were not aimed at targets in Japan but were designed to counter American sea-borne nuclear weapons in the Western Pacific.

This explanation was rejected by Japan, which pointed out that the Soviet Navy already had a sizeable nuclear force in the Pacific.

Yesterday's talks, between Mr Kapitsa and Mr Nobuo Matsunaga, the Japanese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, were the first round of a two day routine discussion session between Foreign Ministry officials of the two countries.

At today's concluding session Japan is expected to raise once more the intractable issue of its claims to the four islands north of Hokkaido that were occupied by the Soviet Union in the closing stages of World War Two.



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## 24 new companies make it a record month for Wales.

The number of businesses choosing to settle in Wales hit an all-time peak in February. Most of the newcomers are in the high-technology sector.

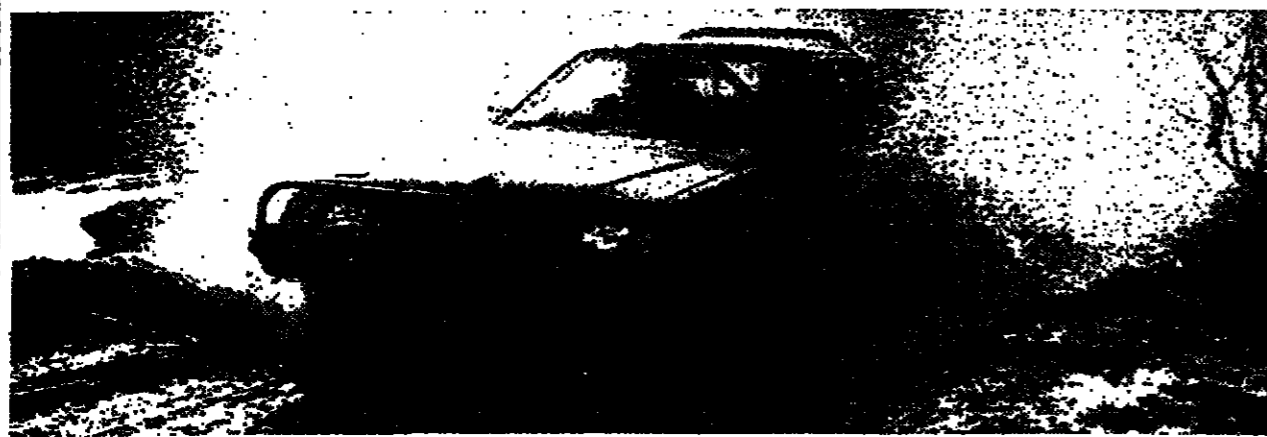
A spokesman for the Welsh Development Agency said, "We are delighted to welcome these recent arrivals."

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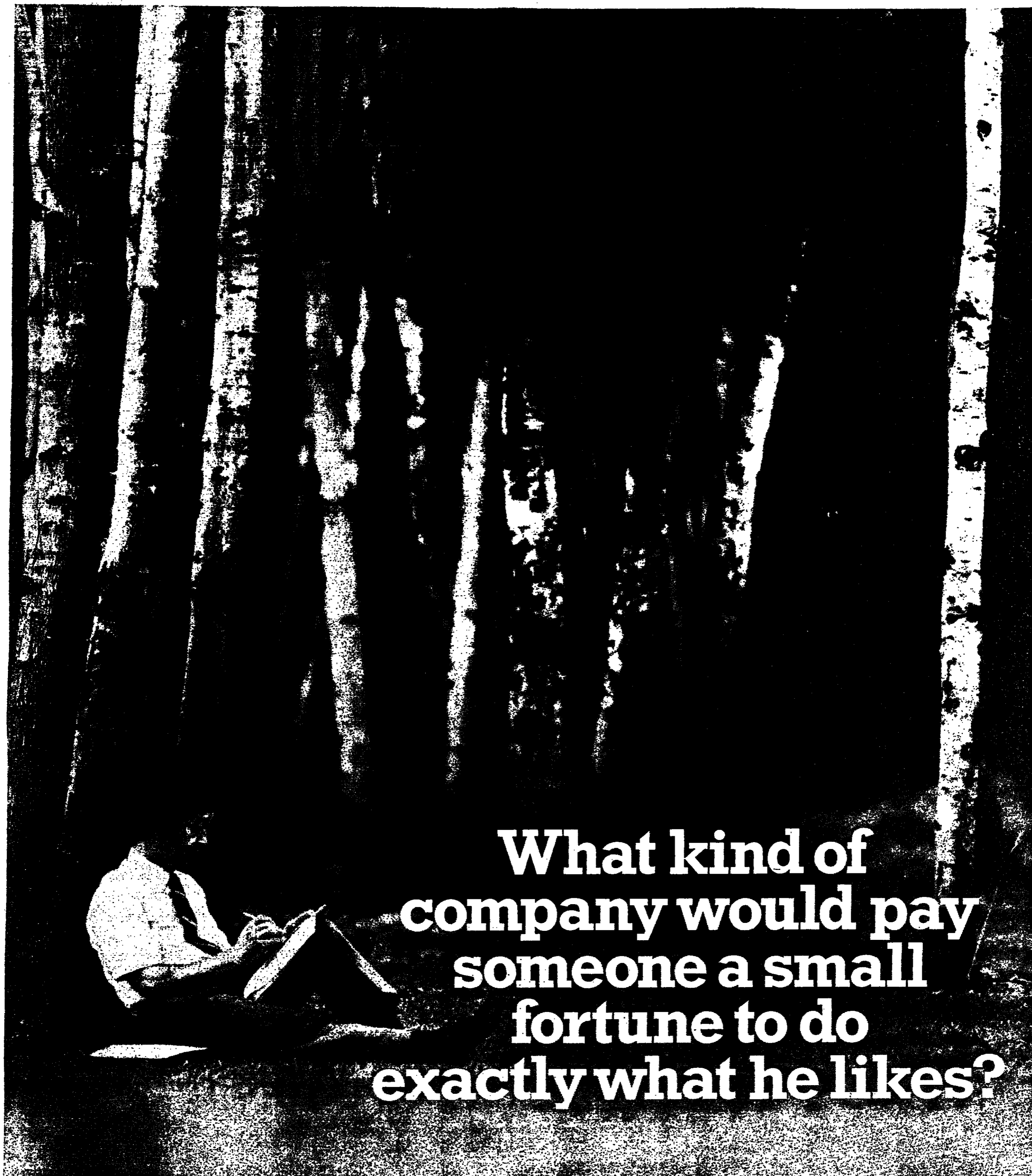
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d-dividend to extrajur., b-annual rate of dividend paid stock dividend, c-liquidating dividend, cd-called, d-new year's Eve, e-dividend declared or paid in preceding 12 months, g-dividend in Canadian funds, subject to 15% non-residence tax, h-dividend declared after split-up or stock dividend, i-dividend declared or paid in preceding 12 months, j-dividend involving interest, k-dividend declared or paid this year, an account payable with dividends in arrears, n-New issue in the past 52 weeks. The high-low range begins with the start of trading, nd-not yet delivered, P/E-price-earnings ratio, r-renewal, s-stock split, x-dividend per share, y-dividend declared or paid in preceding 12 months, z-dividend paid in stock in preceding 12 months, estimated cash value on ex-dividend or ex-distribution date, u-yearly high low range, v-volatility, w-when issued, x-exchange, y-when organized under the Bankruptcy Act, or securities assumed by such companies, wd-when distributed, wf-when issued, ww-with warrants, x-ex-dividend or ex-rights, xdm-ex-distributor or distributor, y-yield, yd-yield dividend, ym-yield multiple, yw-yield warrant, yx-ex-dividend and sales in full, yz-yield dividend and sales in full.











# FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

## Business and the Community

The social conscience of business, big and small, has been stirred to help communities battered by unemployment. This survey looks at the range of new ventures, and the organisations set up to co-ordinate their activities

### New wave of helpers

BY IAN HARGREAVES

MILTON FRIEDMAN once wrote that "there is one and only one social responsibility of business — to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits." It takes some explaining why it should be that during the life of a government committed largely to Professor Friedman's view of things, we should have experienced such a stirring of business's social conscience — a stirring which has been reflected in the creation of a bewildering array of organisations dedicated to drawing business into different forms of community action.

Within the space of three years, over 100 local enterprise agencies (sometimes called enterprise trusts) have sprung into existence, involving about 1,000 companies. Their aim is to foster local economic

regeneration, mainly, though not wholly, by helping to stimulate small business.

In April 1981, a national organisation, Business in the Community, was formed to give a lead in this work.

In the same period, the Confederation of British Industry has formed its free-standing Special Programmes Unit, the main role of which is to get big companies more involved in the Government's youth training and job-creating measures.

Meanwhile, the Action Resource Centre (ARC), founded in 1973 but increasingly vigorous in recent years, has developed a sophisticated brokerage service to supply management secondaries from business to voluntary or semi-voluntary organisations.

Project Fullemploy, a City of London organisation which

trains disadvantaged, mainly black young people, in office skills, has expanded to accommodate 1,000 trainees a year. There are many other projects, like Fullemploy, operating in specific localities.

Other bodies, like the Centre for Employment Initiatives, have concentrated upon promoting community business ventures (normally non-profit distributing enterprises) and the Financial Institutions Group (FIG) recently completed a one-year project on inner city renewal in conjunction with the Department of the Environment. The concept of mixed public-private sector funding for inner city programmes is at the heart of the Government's urban policy.

The idea of socially-active businessmen is not, of course, anything new in Britain. The

social welfare traditions of the Rowntrees and the Cadburys are well known and indeed it was normal for the companies which created Britain's industrial revolution to indulge in programmes of patronage, culture and welfare, whose stamp is indelible in many urban landscapes. This patronage was extended initially to employees, but also to the wider community.

#### Local roots

In the 1960s, however, the process of merger, centralisation and internationalisation took many companies' headquarters and focus away from their original, local roots. At the same time as rising wealth and expectations fuelled a more critical public response to business on issues like pollution, building standards and corporate power.

In the U.S. similar pressures formed earlier and the spark of urban, racial violence forced American businessmen, also the inheritors of a long philanthropic tradition, to make a more systematic response.

In many ways, British businessmen who take an interest in the field of social responsibility still feel themselves to be chasing in the footsteps of Americans. It is hard to get through a conversation on the subject in Britain, without hearing of the wonders of Columbus, Indiana, where Cummins Engine has been an important social benefactor, or Pittsburgh, which a partnership of businessmen and local politicians has helped turn from a dirty, industrial

town with little future to a pleasing headquarters city. "Partnership" and "self-help" have become vogue words. Indeed, American companies in Britain, notably IBM, but also companies like Levi Strauss and Johnson Wax, have made an important contribution to forming the British debate. IBM was a founder member, along with BP, ICI, Finance for Industry and UK Provident, of ARC in 1973, and its UK subsidiary's corporate responsibility strategy is among the most sophisticated in Britain.

It was in the prosperous early 1970s that a small core of British companies started to think about the subject in detail. In 1974, for example, National Westminster Bank created a board level social policy committee under the chairmanship of Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton, now Governor of the Bank of England.

By the less prosperous mid-1970s, however, a Labour Government was in power and the corporate social responsibility movement was going nowhere in particular. Mr Peter Shore, then Environment Secretary, now Shadow Chancellor, however, had also taken an interest in American community development and at the same time Mr Harold Lever, another member of the Cabinet, had, armed with the Bolton report, become an evangelist for small business.

In 1978, Mr Shore's conversations with businessmen led to the formation of the London Enterprise Agency, under the leadership initially of Shell UK.

At the same time—participants disagree about exactly who came first—a number of other towns took up the idea of local enterprise agencies. Among them was the Community of St Helens Trust, perhaps the most influential pioneer of them all.

Enterprise agencies aim to provide, in the words of Mr Bill Humphrey, who recently retired as leader of the St Helens Trust, "an interpretive role between the small business and industry and local and central government."

Mrs Thatcher's election victory, however, meant that Mr Tom King was in the chair when, in April 1980, an Anglo-American conference on community involvement took place at Sunningdale, IBM-UK, GEC, Prudential, BOC, Pilkington, Shell, Marks & Spencer and Finance for Industry were among those represented at the meeting.

#### Activism

The Americans' theme, summarised by Mr James Langton of the Bank of America, was: "Failure to adapt to societal change may prove as lethal as failure to adapt to market change."

From that point on, the preferred rationale for business's community activism became not philanthropy, but the self-interest of creating prosperous, peaceful, creative communities in which to do business.

As it happened, the day before the Sunningdale conference began, rioting broke out in Bristol St. Paul's—an early

tremor of what was to come in several cities a year later. "There's no doubt that swing a lot of people into feeling that something had to be done," says Sir Alastair Pilkington, who was at the conference.

Sir Alastair agreed to chair a working party on community involvement, a steering group which by April 1981, had become Business in the Community, dedicated to spreading the news of the good work being done in St Helens and elsewhere to the rest of the country.

By now, mass unemployment was also causing acute concern and at the Environment Department, Mr Michael Heseltine was trying to devise more effective ways of getting money to the inner cities, especially to Merseyside which was declared Mr Heseltine's own special territory.

The formation of FIG in September 1981 was part of the same momentum, while over at the Manpower Services Commission, an attempt was being made to understand the implications of a youth unemployment problem which was very nearly out of hand. That in turn led Mr James Prior, then the Employment Secretary, to ask the confederation of British industry to set up its special programmes unit to help.

Today, the CBI unit has 27 secondaries and is in the middle of a programme of 100 conferences to recruit employer support for the MSC's new youth training scheme. Business in

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Brixton: scene of an Anglo-American venture

Trevor Humphreys

the Community has just appointed a full-time chief executive, Mr Stephen O'Brien, who, when chairman of Charles Fulton, the money brokers, had set up Project Fullemploy. BIC now has 25 corporate members, but will be using its first national conference in London today to attempt to spread its net much wider. Its other immediate aim is to increase the number of enterprise agencies from 100 to 200 and to get the agencies to take a much longer range view of their role.

#### Questions

"I want it to be the organisation that puts across to the corporate sector, both private and public, that it is in their interest to do something about the quality of life in the communities in which they operate. Business in the Community should be a kind of crusade for corporate social responsibility," says Mr O'Brien.

The rather haphazard and rapid way in which organisations like BIC have developed, however, raises numerous questions about what, in practice, the future is likely to involve.

There is, for a start, the question of overlapping objectives, with many businessmen complaining that there are now so many social canvassers on the road that they are becoming a pest. One option under debate is to create a "single front door," possibly with BIC's name on the door, but others feel that in reducing the diversity of

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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A Department of Industry Service.





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John O'Brien, Chief Executive of BIC

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# We'd like you to consider a proposition that will profit thousands, yet won't make you a penny.

It seems rather naive to ask private and nationalised industry for help when they won't receive a penny for it.

But that's exactly what the Community Programme is doing.

The idea of the Community Programme is simple.

It takes people who've been unemployed for some time and puts them together with work that needs doing to improve the community.

To see the kind of ideas that are wanted, take a look at the list.

All these projects are currently under way and were devised by the

companies on the list. If you don't think you could run a project

- Projects currently run by firms in Britain.**
  - G.E.C. Measurements, Burslem:  
Renovating derelict land.
  - Sherings Building Co., Winchester:  
Cataloguing museum items,  
and giving tours of the museum to children.
  - Mobil Oil, Southend:  
Repairing the sea wall.
  - Otter Controls, Buxton:  
Enlarging the exhibition centre on Roman remains,  
improving local beauty spots.
  - Vale Royal, Northwich:  
Setting up an advice centre.
  - True Brothers, Leicester:  
Providing accommodation for homeless people.
  - Edinburgh Zoo, Edinburgh:  
Improving the zoo grounds.

yourself, you could get together with other sponsors from other

companies, local authorities or voluntary organisations.

You could even second your employees to act as managers in projects being set up.

If you have a project that will benefit the community, the Manpower Services Commission will pay the wages, (the full local rate for the job), and help with the cost of materials.

For all the details of the Community Programme, contact your local Jobcentre, or cut out the coupon below.

You'll find the unemployed will appreciate that a lot more than just your concern.

To: The Community Programme, Room W802, Manpower Services Commission, FREEPOST, Sheffield S1 4BR. No stamp needed.  
Please send me further information about sponsoring a Community Programme project.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Postcode \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Community Programme.**  
Work for people who haven't worked for some time. **MSC**







## BUSINESS AND THE COMMUNITY VII



Business in the Community secondment and their regional responsibilities (left to right): Adam Rendell of Shell (UK) (Hampshire, Kent and Northern Ireland); Philip Gibbs of Marks and Spencer (North West); Anthony Felling of the Department of the Environment (London and the South West)

Ian Hargreaves on the task of secondees who help run community projects

### A two-way culture shock

SECONDMENT of managers to help run community projects is very largely a British idea. It happens on a much smaller scale in the U.S. and hardly at all elsewhere in Europe.

In Britain, however, several companies prefer to make their gifts to good causes in kind. "If you give money you really don't have any idea what happens to it. If you put in a person, that is much better," says Mr Richard Marriott who is in charge of IBM UK's community involvement programme.

According to Cecilia Allen, director of Action Resource Centre, the organisation set up in 1973 by a group of companies primarily to place secondees in useful schemes, there are about 25 companies in Britain which provide full-time secondees and many more willing to release people part-time or on an ad hoc consultancy basis.

**Part-timers**

At any one time, Arc has 120 secondees in the field, some of them part-time. In addition it has 30 employees in a range of regional offices.

The attraction of secondment for the supplier companies varies. For some, such as in the initial stages at least for National Westminster Bank, the largest single supplier of

secondees, it was a way of making use of surplus managerial talent after a merger. Other companies say secondment often provides a creative way out when the pyramid structure of promotions results in a blockage.

Generally speaking, secondees fall into three categories: young managers in their late 20s or early 30s who are able to profit from a broadening of experience; mid-career people trapped either in a promotion log-jam or some other lacuna and pre-retirement managers whom it is willing to finance in secondment. Secondees normally serve between six months and three years.

From the point of view of the recipient, secondees can obviously offer a range of practical managerial experience which many voluntary organisations would not otherwise be able to afford.

There are, however, many potential snags. One, says Cecilia Allen, is that senior executives often find it hard to settle into the informal atmosphere of community projects, where they have to answer their own telephones and make their own coffee.

More easily avoidable problems are the tendency of some companies to push individuals

into secondment at very short notice, which is disturbing to a person's morale, and once he is out in the field to leave him to his own devices, rather than keeping him abreast of developments back in the company.

Re-entry to a company after a secondment is often tricky—the culture shock of returning home can be much worse than the shock when leaving it—but is made worse if secondees are kept in doubt about their career prospects.

Indeed, if secondees are seen to suffer in career terms because of their stint outside the company, secondment obviously comes to be seen as a form of punishment within the company.

After several years of trial and error, the leading secondment companies have now honed out most of the problems. They try to give up to six months' notice of a secondment and some offer basic training as preparation.

**Briefing**

While away from the company, the secondee is attached to a senior manager back at base as a link person and is brought back at least twice a year with other secondees for a day of briefing. Negotiations

about career path after return start up to six months before the secondment ends and several companies say that the majority of their secondees actually return to promotion.

Some have even been promoted whilst on secondment. Marks & Spencer says of the 47 secondees it has sent out, two-thirds returned to the company at a higher grade than when they left it.

Both sender and recipient organisations also agree that it is vital for a secondee to have a clear, written job description and that the receiving organisation be in a position to ask an unsuitable secondee to leave.

Even with these precautions, however, secondment has its limitations. Arc has found it necessary, for the sake of continuity, to recruit full-time, selected employees to balance the secondees in its own organisation.

At the CBI Special Programme Unit, Mr James Ocker, the chief executive, says he spends far too much time negotiating with companies to extend the periods of service of the unit's secondees, most of whom are either pre-retirement or senior managers who would otherwise have been made redundant in the rapid contraction of British industry in the

last three years.

The CBI unit runs almost entirely on secondees and lacks the funds, as Mr Cooke would like, to be able to pay younger secondees who are offered conventional jobs elsewhere at least a part-time salary to retain their experience within the unit.

The other difficulty about secondment, however, which suggests the problems listed above are far from insuperable, is that there are never enough secondees to go round. Indeed, with the proliferation of good cause organisations in the last two or three years, increasingly scarce often take place to obtain them.

**More confidence**

However, organisations which do second people all seem to agree on one thing: that their managers return with more skills and confidence than they had at the start.

Mr Allen says that the emergence of the CBI unit and Business in the Community is pushing Arc in new directions, such as training for the disabled and community business and school-leavers' links, rather than the employment creation and small business advice in which it has been heavily involved since 1973.

TIM CONNOR, aged 45 and manager of Marks & Spencer's Leicester City centre store—one of the busiest in the country—hopes to be elected to the executive of the Leicestershire Business Venture.

He should have something to offer because he was the driving force behind setting up the venture project to often held up as an example elsewhere in the country of what enterprise agencies can achieve.

In 1980 he was plucked from his tightly controlled M & S management network. "The shock comes from moving into the outside world," he says.

Leaving school at 15, he was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Royal Leicestershire Regiment before joining M & S as a management trainee in Chesterfield. Promotions carried him from Newcastle to Swindon and Coventry.

PROFILE: TIM CONNOR

## Where business skills count



Tim Connor: from M & S to the Leicestershire Business Venture

'I have developed very close contacts with people in both local authorities and the private sector. I feel very much among friends'

assistance were coming in at the rate of more than 2,000 a year, requiring over 300 in-depth reviews — "Sitting down with a banker, an accountant and me with my marketing hat on to put a deal together," he says.

Mr Connor laughs and offers a word of warning to colleagues within M & S: "Secondment is a tough assignment. It is a challenge, not a soft option."

He often worked a 12-hour day, but says it was an opportunity not to be missed. "It was an experience much broader than that offered by corporate life — the chance to meet and mix with a cross-section of people from so many different backgrounds."

Mr Connor talks about the importance of bringing the benefits of that "experience" back to the day-to-day job.

But how difficult is it to make the transition back to company life? "It's a bit like riding a bike, you never forget."

What skills following his secondment did he feel he had

to offer? Mr Connor smiles, draws a deep breath and replies: "Oh, the two key elements are leadership and communications allied to increasing turnover, cutting costs, giving service, looking after the staff and running a happy ship — there, that's page 46 of the M & S management training manual."

**Up-front style**

In what Mr Connor describes as his "up-front style of management," his Leicestershire venture days offer another advantage: "I have developed very close contacts with people in both the local authorities and the private sector. I feel very much among friends."

But in his time helping to set up new business ventures had he established any potential new suppliers for M & S? "No such luck," he sighs before dashing off across the sales floor to deal with yet another customer query.

Arthur Smith

# 'If at first you don't succeed, give up!'

Shell believes that all companies, both large and small, have a role to play as members of the communities within which they operate. There are many fields in which a contribution can be made.

The alleviation of unemployment, the training of young people, the encouragement of enterprise, support for small businesses, conservation of the environment are all areas where endeavours may bear fruit.

**How can you help?**

First perhaps by a change of attitude. Our educational system tends to elevate the professions above industry, the theoretical above the practical, the thinker above the doer. This contributes to a low value having been placed on enterprise.

To quote from a speech by John Raisman, Chairman and Chief Executive of Shell UK: "...the entrepreneurial failure is often subjected to social stigma and discouraged from trying again. A case of 'if at first you don't succeed, give up!'

This criticism could just as well apply to any attempt at community relations; not every scheme succeeds, not all ideas are welcomed, but if you really want to play your part there are many avenues open to any company, large, medium or small.

**Give time and experience.**

Enterprise agencies, supported by large and small companies, local authorities and colleges, are providing help and advice to small firms.

One example in London has been the conversion of derelict inner-city property into purpose-designed small business units, fulfilling a vital need.

More such developments are needed in every city.

Help your local enterprise agency to help others by sharing your special skills and experience.

## An attitude that has Shell worried.

**Give orders.**

There is nothing like an order to encourage a small business.

Don't compromise your standards but do help new small suppliers to develop their business to be able properly to serve your needs.

Help them to run efficient, professional, well managed operations.

**Help youth training and employment.**

Firms of any size can join the many schemes devised to provide work and training for young people — or start their own.

Community Task Force is active in organising useful work for young people and also teaches skills. They and others could use your help.

**Conserving the environment.**

Work on conservation tasks stimulates young people and is socially useful. There is plenty to do. Organisations like the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, the Nature Conservancy Council and the Civic Trust can tell you how you can help or become involved.

**Help your staff to help.**

In the hands of local volunteers, small sums of money, the use of buildings, surplus equipment, an expert's spare time, can be useful in many ways.

Your employees are probably already involved through many local organisations and could suggest ways in which you can help. Especially they are likely to be in touch with local schools and colleges.

Many teachers are very keen to foster better links with local business and to give their pupils a better chance in life.

Help to break down the barriers, seek to improve understanding, change attitudes.

**Your community needs you.**

Business in the Community acts as the catalyst between those willing to offer assistance and those most urgently in need.

This may be the most effective way in which your resources and people can be mobilised, but there are many others.

For a booklet about some of the things which Shell UK does, to give you some ideas about what you might do, send the coupon.

Please send me the booklet 'Shell and the Community'

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



Shell UK Ltd, UK PA/24 P.O. Box No. 148, Shell Mex House, The Strand, London WC2R 0EX



